



**State of Wisconsin**  
**Department of Public Instruction**  
Elizabeth Burmaster, State Superintendent

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**\*\*\*NEWS RELEASE\*\*\***

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**Wisconsin receives state-level Goldman Sachs Foundation  
Prize for Excellence in International Education**

MADISON—The prestigious Goldman Sachs Foundation Prize for Excellence in International Education was presented to State Superintendent Elizabeth Burmaster and Gov. Jim Doyle during the first-ever Statewide International Education Summit held Thursday in Madison. Wisconsin was the only state to receive the state-level award from the foundation, which recognized its efforts to include global knowledge and skills in all aspects of teaching and learning.

“Education about the world and its diverse peoples, languages, and cultures extends beyond social studies and world language classrooms,” Burmaster said. “In Wisconsin, we know that students and teachers need to travel abroad, study world languages, learn skills to work with those from other backgrounds and cultures, and to have hands-on experiences with the complex issues that cross geographical borders.”

Michael Levine, executive director for the Asia Society’s National Campaign for International Education in the Schools, made the formal presentation. The Goldman Sachs Foundation prize comes during the nationwide observance of the “Year of Languages,” established to promote the use of world language education to build ties to other cultures. It provides \$25,000 to support Wisconsin’s international education programs.

The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction was the first state to develop a comprehensive curriculum guide to support global studies. The state has long-standing student, teacher, and sister state exchanges with Germany, started in 1976, and Japan, started in 1990, and more recently with France and Thailand. Through these partnerships, students, educators, civic leaders, and business people have hosted world visitors and traveled overseas to learn more about other cultures. For example, through

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sister school activities with the Japanese Ministry of Education, more than 125,000 Wisconsin students have had a Japanese teacher sharing their classroom for a month. In addition, the award recognized that

- 50 percent of Wisconsin's seventh- through 12th-grade students are enrolled in world language courses, in order of enrollment: Spanish; French; German; Japanese; Latin; American Sign Language; Native American Languages, including Ojibwe, Menomonee, Oneida, and Ho-Chunk; Chinese; Italian; and Russian.
- Wisconsin students, who originate from more than 100 countries, have high access to English as Second Language programs, the newest offered by the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee to certify teachers speaking the Hmong and Lao languages.
- Higher education offers rich language resources through the University of Wisconsin System campuses as well as through the state's technical colleges and private colleges and universities. Eight national outreach centers work with Wisconsin educators to teach about world regions.
- The state superintendent and governor collaborated to create the Statewide International Education Council, which brings key education, private and public university, and business leaders together to discuss global education issues.
- The DPI represents education on an International Inter-Agency Work Group to bring collaborative outreach abroad with other state agencies, including tourism, commerce, agriculture, and the arts.
- The department's Quality Educator Initiative reformed educator licensing to create flexibility for teachers to pursue teaching and language study abroad as a means for fulfilling license renewal objectives set in their professional development plans.
- Wisconsin, which is one of four states that has become home to Hmong refugees living in Thailand, was the only state education department receiving funds in 2004 from the Fulbright-Hays Group Projects Abroad program. The DPI sent 20 educators to Thailand and Laos to study Southeast Asian culture and language and learn how the state can respond quickly to the needs of the approximately 3,000 Hmong refugees coming to Wisconsin schools and communities.

The Goldman Sachs Foundation and Asia Society created the Prizes for Excellence in International Education in June 2003 to identify and recognize innovative examples of international education for K-12 students and teachers in the United States. Wisconsin's prize was one of five announced in November and selected from 400 applicants in 44 states.

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**NOTE:** Additional information on state activities is available on the Department of Public Instruction's International Education website at < <http://www.dpi.state.wi.us/dpi/dlsis/cal/interntled.html> >.